

New Castle City Council
Regular Council Meeting at Town Hall – 201 Delaware Street – New Castle
Tuesday – March 12, 2013 – 7 p.m.

Present:

Council President William Barthel
Councilperson John Cochran
Councilperson John Gaworski
Councilperson Ted Megginson
Councilperson Teel Petty

Also present: Mayor Donald Reese, Treasurer Janet Carlin, City Administrator Cathryn Thomas, Police Chief Kevin McDerby, City Solicitor Daniel Losco, Building Official Jeff Bergstrom

Approval of Treasurer's Report

Treasurer Carlin presented the report. As of February 28, 2013: Petty cash on hand, \$1,100; total monthly deposits, \$191,950.63; total cash on hand in the M&T accounts, \$439,101.77; total certificates of deposit, money market and Delaware Government Investment Pool was \$2,259,037.61. Total cash on hand, \$2,698,139.38.

A motion was made by Councilperson Cochran to approve the Treasurer's Report. Councilperson Gaworski seconded the motion. The report was approved unanimously.

Report from the City Administrator

Administrator Thomas said she notified Council they would not have a monthly written report because she was out of the office unexpectedly last week. In lieu of the monthly report she will do a final report, wrapping up items that have been accomplished and items Council will want to look at going forward. Her last day as City Administrator is March 20. She also provided a brief recap of some changes in terms of responsibilities at the City because of her departure. She reminded citizens there is an upcoming New Castle City Election (Saturday, April 13 at the New Castle Senior Center.)

President Barthel said the report was accepted as presented.

Staff reports

Chief McDerby extended appreciation to Mrs. Thomas for her service to the City.

President Barthel said the staff reports were accepted as presented.

Grant Review

Councilperson Cochran provided the review. Grant activity: Banks Bldg. Preservation, \$4,000; Coastal Mgt. Flood/Dike Control, \$100,000; NDREC-Broad Dike Wetland Protection Program, \$800,000; ARRA Green Project Storm & Water Pond Retrofits, \$1,710,627; Recycling Grant, \$21,600; and Tobacco Grant, \$19,198.94.

Communications

Councilperson Gaworski said the Police Department held an Awards Ceremony and Officer Wood was voted by his peers as Officer of the Year. He said kudos go to all of the department members for their efforts.

Councilperson Megginson said he received communications from a resident of Washington Street who is concerned about the truck traffic once it starts up again. There are no trucks on Washington Street now and most of the neighbors, though they are a little upset about the construction, are happy there is no truck traffic. The resident would like the City to look further into keeping truck traffic off the street. Mr. Megginson suggested holding a public hearing on the matter and invite DelDOT and the State representatives.

President Barthel said that is something the next Council can look into.

Business from the Floor

No comments from the floor.

Business from the Mayor

Mayor Reese said he provided Council a newspaper article. Word is the State has given the Sheriff's House to the Federal government. He asked a representative of the Jaycees to provide an update on Separation Day.

Jeff Lank said that when the Jaycees agreed to help out with Separation Day this year they promised nothing would be reduced, only enhanced. Everything Council is familiar with—regarding the parade, vendors, community organizations, games—will be there. A contract with the carnival company is in place. The committee has addressed complaints they were aware of last year from residents regarding pricing and maintenance of the rides. They did have to go with the same company because it is a one-day event. They researched five companies. The one selected has updates and new rides, and a strict policy in terms of when they will stop—which will be before the fireworks start. The company that provided the portable toilets last year was not invited back. The group is deciding between two companies. There will be more this year. There will also be increased publicity, including a new website. There will be some new attractions and events, including a beauty pageant and a Sep Day 5K run.

President Barthel said he received a communication from Mike Alfree, president of the Trustees, who shared a press release. It indicates the Trustees approved the budget for fiscal year 2014. Priority was placed on line items in support of Trust-owned buildings and lands. In addition, the Board committed \$200,000 to reimburse the City of New Castle for loan payments owed under the Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. That brings Trust support of the projects to \$500,000. President Barthel said this is the extent of the funding for the City for this year. It is a big commitment.

Recognition of Thomas Donlon for 15 Years serving on the New Castle City Police Force

President Barthel said the City is recognizing the service of Master Corporal Thomas Donlon.

A motion was made by Councilperson Gaworski to approve the Resolution 2013-05 Councilperson Megginson seconded the motion. The resolution passed unanimously.

Presentation by Jim Travers of information on rehabilitation of the William Penn statue

Mr. Travers provided an overview of the need for the work and the cost. Three bids have come in: \$3,600, \$3,600 and \$2,625. The bids do not include the cost of any permits for the work. He elected through the Travers family to cover up to 80 percent of the cost to get the project done this year if the City can come up with the rest.

President Barthel said Council can take it into consideration in two months when it does the budget. He said Mr. Travers offer was gracious.

Mr. Travers said he wanted to get it in front of Council. Every year on Oct. 27 the Courthouse will be the annual William Penn Day. It would be nice to be done by then. His goal is to have it by Separation Day.

The refurbishing would take three to four working days.

New Business

1. Confirm appointments of the Mayor to the Planning Commission.

Councilperson Petty made a motion to approve Resolution No. 2013-09. Councilperson Megginson seconded the motion.

President Barthel said it is a resolution to approve the Mayor's appointments to the City Planning Commission. Jonathan Justice and Dorsey Fiske are being reappointed.

The motion passed unanimously.

2. Motion, Discussion and Vote on a Bank Resolution, to pay to DNREC the fourth quarterly installment of the principal and interest payment for the City's ARRA projects, in the amount of \$49,022.49.

Councilperson Cochran made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilperson Petty seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

3. Motion, Discussion and Vote on a Bank Resolution, to pay to A-Del contractors for debris cleanup from Hurricane Sandy, in the amount of \$200,908.89.

Councilperson Megginson made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilperson Cochran seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

President Barthel said it is the City's hope the bills will be reimbursed 75 percent by FEMA.

4. Motion, Discussion and Vote on Resolution No. 2013-10, authorizing the City to enter jointly with MSC into a contract with Collins Business Systems, Inc., for an upgraded phone system

Councilperson Cochran made a motion to approve the resolution. Councilperson Petty seconded the motion.

The cost of upgrading the system is \$24,192, and the City's share will be \$13,994.67.

President Barthel said Council previously had agreed it wanted to go forward with this purchase. The City looked into financing the purchase but the decision was to buy it outright and avoid the additional fees.

The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Comments from the floor.

Angelique Maravelias, 2013 president for the New Castle Jaycees, introduced herself to Council. She thanked the City for all it does and offered the continued support of the Jaycees.

Chris Castagno, of East Fifth Street, expressed his appreciation and gratitude for City Administrator Cathie Thomas, and wished her all the best. He thanked her for all of her service to the City of New Castle.

Jean Norvell said she too came out to the meeting to express her thanks for the work Mrs. Thomas has done. Mrs. Thomas was significant in the Charter Change, what's happening with the dikes, getting grants and more.

Esther Lovlie presented a gift to Mrs. Thomas as a sign of the community's appreciation.

Mayor Reese said Mrs. Thomas is known from one end of the State to the other. She has served the City residents well and she will be missed.

Mrs. Thomas expressed her thanks to the current Council, and prior Council members she has worked under. Councilperson Petty and Mayor Reese were on the Council that hired her. She said she really enjoyed many of things she has done in the City. The history of the City is unparalleled. The City and the residents have been good stewards of it. It is a beautiful setting on the river. She will miss her home and its view of the river. Mostly she will miss the residents in the community that she has worked with. She thanked the community for the opportunity to serve them and giving her their support.

President Barthel said he and Mrs. Thomas had worked closely the past four years. He has relied heavily on her, and the City has accomplished a lot. He said it has been great working with her. She is the reason a lot of things the City has done have happened.

President Barthel added that you can tell what professionalism is when someone gives their resignation and continues to work as hard as ever for two months afterward.

Councilperson Petty echoed the thanks to Mrs. Thomas.

A motion was made by Councilperson Megginson to adjourn the meeting. Councilperson Gaworski seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Dickinson
New Castle City Clerk